



BlackBerry Customer Success

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust speeds up dictation turnaround and reduces costs with BlackBerry solution

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BSMHFT) provides mental healthcare to a population of 1.2 million, making it one of the largest mental health foundation trusts in the United Kingdom.

KEY BENEFITS

- Enhanced data security
- Improved workflow management
- Workload prioritisation
- High audio quality

THE CHALLENGE

BSMHFT operates from over 100+ sites spread across a 172-square-mile region. Around 135 consultant teams, each comprised of a consultant and several doctors and nurses, provide care to patients both at home and on-site. Over the years there has been a steady rise in the volume of correspondence associated with the ever-increasing demand on healthcare. Currently, a very small number of services within BSMHFT use tape-based (analogue) dictation to capture information from clinicians. Traditionally, dictation is recorded by clinicians on tapes and then ferried to and from multiple locations across the Trust to medical secretaries. The correspondence is then typed up by the secretaries and printed out for approval by the clinician before copies are posted to service users or other agencies.

Managing dictation for such a mobile workforce presented several challenges. The first was workload. "Clinicians would sometimes wait until it was convenient for them to return to base and drop off a tape with their secretary," explains Gunther Empl, ICT program manager at BSMHFT. "The secretaries ended up with one or two tapes and didn't know how many dictations were on them." A second challenge was the risk of damaged tapes, which meant that dictations would have to be redone. Finally, tapes presented a security risk. They contain private patient information, and it was important to protect the confidentiality of the recordings.

THE SOLUTION

BSMHFT began looking at digital dictation solutions, most of which involved replacing tape recorders with digital recorders. But this would have only partially solved the problem as digital recorders still had to be physically returned to the office. In addition, purchasing a whole new fleet of digital recorders would have been very expensive.

So the Trust took a different tack. It deployed BigHand for Healthcare, a customised digital dictation, speech recognition and clinical correspondence solution that replaces tape and paper based systems used in medical dictation, transcription and transmission. Based out of London, BigHand, a member of the BlackBerry® Alliance Program, is a leading provider of digital dictation and speech recognition technology to the UK healthcare market.

“With BigHand digital dictation for BlackBerry the backlog in one team has almost completely gone and correspondence is being sent out just a few days after recording, instead of a few weeks as sometimes happened in the past.”

Gunther Empl
ICT program manager
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust

Birmingham and Solihull 
Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

Industry: Healthcare

Region: UK

Solution:

BlackBerry® Enterprise Server
BlackBerry® smartphones
BigHand Digital Dictation

Used by over 1,000 organisations globally, BigHand voice productivity software allows professionals to record, edit and send voice files or verbal tasks via BlackBerry® smartphone to office based support, outsourced services or convert voice to text. Recordings submitted via BigHand for BlackBerry smartphone instantly enter the Trust’s workflow, and are tracked via status updates, priorities and alerts. BigHand software helps NHS Trusts expedite the document production process, reduce support and hardware costs, and improve client service. BigHand is used by over 25 NHS Trusts in the UK incorporating over 15,000 users.

Since all the senior doctors and consultants were already using BlackBerry® smartphones for mobile email, the Foundation Trust decided to get even more value from its existing deployment and added BigHand digital dictation for BlackBerry smartphones to the solution, across a potential population of over 500 users. It enables clinicians to create new recordings directly from their smartphones.

Dictations are then automatically and securely sent using the push technology of the BlackBerry® solution to secretaries for transcription. The application also lets clinicians see the real-time status of each transcription and review final documents directly via their BlackBerry smartphone.

BSMHFT BENEFITS

The deployment proved to be a success for the clinicians straight from the outset. At the end of the first phase, with just over one fifth of the 500 consultants using the solution, 67% of all dictations were already coming through the BlackBerry solution.

The BlackBerry solution with BigHand provides several advantages over the previous tape-and-paper system. It has brought remote dictation to a broader population of users without requiring any investment in new devices, and has enhanced data security compared to analogue tapes, which are not encrypted and easily misplaced.

Furthermore, the BlackBerry solution with BigHand digital dictation has improved workflow management. Turnaround times have improved because consultants no longer have to return to the office to hand over tapes. An urgent recording is dealt with more swiftly because the consultant can flag it for priority handling. It has reduced the bottlenecks that used to be caused by the sudden arrival of cassettes - instead dictations are now handled as they arrive. Also, secretaries waste less time chasing down tapes, leaving them free to focus on more effective activities.

The solution has also contributed to better workload allocation. Before, the support services manager had no way of seeing how many recordings were in the backlog and couldn’t re-assign recordings to other secretaries. “In one pilot area the backlog has now almost completely gone,” says Empl. “And most correspondence is being sent out just a few days after recording, instead of a few weeks as sometimes happened in the past.”

Finally, all these improvements are expected to generate significant cost savings, as there are no costly analogue dictation devices and tapes to buy. Also, due to a reduced backlog and better allocation of existing secretarial resources, the Trust will avoid the cost of temporary staffing when secretaries are on leave.

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